



IM Weekly Highlights



- At the Tues., March 8 meeting of the IM Project Directors (IMPD), Glendive Police Chief Alan Michaels was re-elected as Chair of the IMPD Board of Directors. Butte-Silver Bow Sheriff John Walsh, former 2nd Vice Chair, was elected to the 1st Vice Chair position. Lt. Larry Irwin, Montana Highway Patrol, was elected to the 2nd Vice Chair post. (More information on the IMPD meeting will be in next week's HAM.)
- Tribal agencies are reminded to submit their answers to the 2011 Statewide Public Safety Communications Questionnaire ASAP.

Technical Assistance Announced at IMFC Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Members of the IM Finance Committee (IMFC) learned at their March 7 meeting in Helena that the State of Montana was able to identify \$30,000 in funding to assist Lewis and Clark County with technical operations of the Master Controller for the statewide radio system. This news was particularly welcomed because the ability to assist Lewis and Clark County for all the technical assistance it provides to the IM is a top goal of the project.

In other business, Sheriff Craig Doolittle, Jefferson County, was elected as the IMFC Vice Chair. Scott Bradford, PSSB, gave an update on the latest IM Contract Sub-Committee meeting where members reviewed current IM contracts. The Northern Tier Aviat Networks microwave contract was identified as the most critical at this time. Correspondence is being drafted and additional meetings scheduled to close out the contract this spring.

The committee reviewed the IM check register as well as funding and budget reports, and they were brought up to date on the specifics of various grants. Plans are to request extensions for DHS FY08, IECGP FY09 and PSIC grant funds. IM

Executive Director Kevin Bruski reported on the status of award letters, purchase orders, narrowband equipment allocations and IM FY12 budget preparations. The budget will be presented to IM Project Directors in April. It will outline needed contributions from local and state agencies for the next fiscal year. A list of current contributions was provided to members, and reminders are being sent to those entities that have not yet paid.

The IM has distributed a survey to county commissioners and state agencies to solicit their input on future priorities and management of the statewide radio system. Results will be reported at the next IMGC meeting.

Scott Bradford reported that between 90 and 95% of COPS grant funds have been expended to date. Lt. Larry Irwin, Montana Highway Patrol (MHP), said MHP is preparing for the turn up of microwave along the Northern Tier with caches of spare parts in place and preparations underway for call taking.

The next IMFC meeting will be held on Mon., April 11 at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd., in Helena beginning at 9:00 am.

COML Training Date Change

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

FEMA has recently changed the 24-hour Communications Unit Leader (COML) training session to a 28-hour format. Hence, Montana's training session will now begin the afternoon of Mon., June 27. As mentioned in the Feb. 25 issue of *Heard Across Montana*, the course trains participants on how to coordinate on-scene emergency communications during a multi-jurisdictional response to an event.

Several pre-requisites must be met before taking the course, including completion of Incident Command System (ICS) courses 100, 200 and 300 as well as Independent Study (IS) courses 700 and 800b. For more information, visit: <http://training.fema.gov/IS/>.

Course location will be decided based on where interested participants are located. IM Executive Director Kevin Bruski wants to start collecting information on participants as soon as possible so that meeting logistics may be arranged. Please e-

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mail him at kbruski@interopmtproject.org as soon as possible if you are planning on attending.

Exercise and Contract Closeout Dominate IMGC Discussion

By Scott Bradford sbradford@mt.gov

The March IM Governance Committee (IMGC) meeting focused on important milestones in the IM build-out along the Northern Tier and in other key regions of the state. In addition to normal business matters, Committee Chair Bill Fleiner provided a report outlining the structure and timing for upcoming Northern Alliance exercises, which will take place in April and May in four border regions along the Northern Tier. Meetings and training sessions are currently underway with key agencies. The entire process—including after-action reports—will be completed before the end of June. Although the exercise will test a number of different response capabilities, emergency communications is the primary system to be tested, including IM trunked and conventional resources. For more information about the exercise, visit: http://interop.mt.gov/northern_alliance.mcp.x.

It was also reported that the Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) annual review will take place on Wed., June 8. Time and location will be announced at a future meeting. COML training is also set for June 27-June 30 (see related article).

Scott Bradford, IM Contract Sub-Committee Chair, reported on progress made at a recent meeting. The Northern Tier microwave contract was identified as the most critical at this time. Committee members agreed on a process and proposed timelines for closing it. Correspondence is being drafted and additional conference calls and meetings scheduled to close out the contract this spring. Scott also briefed the group on the status of other microwave, trunking and infrastructure projects. A recommendation not to renew the current infrastructure term contract, which expires in June, was made, but no decision arrived at.

In addition to a brief description of the IM Board of Directors (IMPD) officer election process to take place at the March 8 IMPD meeting, most of the remaining discussion centered around ideas for future governance changes and recent responses to requests for short-term funding. Kevin Bruski and Bill Fleiner, IMGC chair, reported on progress and indicated that counties and state agencies were completing survey forms to assess stakeholder

ideas. Survey results will be evaluated and reported to the group in April.

The next IMGC meeting is set for Mon., April 11, at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd., in Helena beginning at 1:00 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Tues., March 22**
State Agency Radio Users Task Force
Helena • 9:00 - 10:30 am
Old Livestock Building, 1310 E. Lockey St.
- **Wed., March 23**
Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Consortium
Bozeman • 9:00 am - noon
SAR Building, 219 Tamarack
- **Thurs., March 24**
I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am - noon
Butte Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George Street
- **Thurs., March 24**
Big Sky 11 Consortium
Billings • 9:00 am - noon
Yellowstone Co. EOC/Fire Station, 2305 8th Ave. North
- **Mon., March 28**
IM Technical Committee (IMTC)
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Large Conf. Rm., Lower Level, 2715 Skyway Dr.
- **Mon., April 11**
IM Finance Committee (IMFC)
Helena • 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Mon., April 11**
IM Governance Committee (IMGC)
Helena • 1:00 - 5:00 pm
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Tues., April 12**
IM Project Directors Meeting (IMPD)
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Large Conf. Rm., Lower Level, 2715 Skyway Dr.

*Our best wishes for
a speedy recovery
go out to Carl
Hotvedt, Public
Safety Services
Bureau Chief*

